

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SHUM, RP
SUBJECT: EXPECTED CONGRESSIONAL INQUIRY ON BARRIO NASSCO

REF: STATE 086689

1. SUMMARY: BARRIO NASSCO, LOCATED IN THE BATAAN EXPORT PROCESSING ZONE, IS UNDER PRESSURE TO RELOCATE TO MAKE WAY FOR ADDITIONAL INDUSTRIAL PROJECTS. ITS RESIDENTS ARE SQUATTERS, AND THEY ARE UNHAPPY WITH THE RELOCATION SITES PROPOSED BY ZONE AUTHORITIES. END SUMMARY.

2. AN AMERICAN CITIZEN PROTESTANT CHURCH WORKER RELATED THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION ABOUT THE BARRIO NASSCO SITUATION. HE HAS VISITED THE BARRIO SEVERAL TIMES IN RECENT MONTHS AND HAS STUDIED CONDITIONS THERE. HE ATTENDED A CATHOLIC CHURCH-SPONSORED SEMINAR THERE SOME WEEKS AGO AND SUSPECTS THAT THE SEMINAR WAS THE SOURCE OF THE INFORMATION WHICH PROVOKED REFTTEL.

3. BARRIO NASSCO IS IN MARIVELES MUNICIPALITY, BATAAN PROVINCE, WITHIN THE CURRENT BATAAN EXPORT PROCESSING ZONE. IT IS NAMED AFTER A FORMER GOP-OWNED FIRM, NATIONAL STEEL AND SHIPYARD CO., NOW THE PRIVATELY-OWNED BATAAN SHIPYARD AND ENGINEERING CO. KOKOY ROMUALDEZ AND FORMER
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CONGRESSMAN PABLO ROMAN ARE IMPORTANT STOCKHOLDERS IN BASECO.

4. BARRIO NASSCO IS ONE OF TWO BARRIOS (BARANGAYS) AFFECTED THUS FAR BY THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE BATAAN EPZ. THE BARRIO WAS SETTLED WHEN THE NASSCO SHIPYARD WAS OPENED IN 1950. UNTIL 1963 IT WAS AN UNUSED PORTION OF A US

MILITARY RESERVATION. WHEN THE LAND REVERTED TO THE GOP IN 1963, RESIDENTS ATTEMPTED TO CLAIM OWNERSHIP OF THEIR LAND UNDER A HOMESTEAD LAW BUT WERE FRUSTRATED BY THE LOCAL CONGRESSMAN, ROMAN, WHO HAD OTHER PLANS FOR THE AREA. THE RESIDENTS REMAIN SQUATTERS, AND MOST NOW WORK AT BASECO OR OTHER NEARBY INDUSTRIAL SITES. THE AREA BECAME A FREE TRADE ZONE IN 1969 AND AN EXPORT PROCESSING ZONE IN 1972. AS PART OF PHASE I OF THE EPZ DEVELOPMENT, ALL RESIDENTS OF THE FIRST BARRIO WERE MOVED TO A RELOCATION SITE IN 1972 TO MAKE WAY FOR FACTORIES.

5. IN 1973, PHASE II BEGAN, AND FORD CANADA BUILT AN ASSEMBLY PLANT ON ABOUT ONE-THIRD OF BARRIO NASSCO. RESIDENTS WERE MOVED, OFTEN FORCIBLY, TO THE REMAINING TWO-THIRDS OF THE BARRIO. BEPZ AUTHORITIES ARE NOW SHOWING SIGNS OF WANTING TO MOVE OUT EVERYONE IN BARRIO NASSCO (AND NEIGHBORING BARRIO SISIMAN) TO PREPARE FOR PHASE III.

6. RESIDENTS ARE UNHAPPY ABOUT THE PROPOSED MOVE. SOME SAY THEY WERE GIVEN 1000-PESO CHECKS BY THE BEPZ AUTHORITIES TO MOVE, BUT THE CHECKS BOUNCED. OTHERS SAY THEY WERE OFFERED AS LITTLE AS ONE-THIRD OF THE REAL VALUE OF THEIR PROPERTY, ON A TAKE-IT-OR-LEAVE-IT BASIS. THE PROPOSED RELOCATION SITES ALSO ARE NOT ALL THAT APPEALING: ONE IS 20 KM AWAY FROM THE PRESENT LOCATION AND WOULD REQUIRE CONSIDERABLE COMMUTING TIME AND EXPENSE; ANOTHER LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SITE IS ADMITTEDLY ONLY TEMPORARY AND WOULD REQUIRE ANOTHER FUTURE MOVE; A THIRD SITE WAS ACCEPTED ENTHUSIASTICALLY BY BARRIO RESIDENTS BUT LATER WITHDRAWN BY BEPZ.

7. COMMENT: WE WILL CHECK FURTHER TO SEE WHETHER THE GOP OR BEPZ HAVE PUBLISHED ANYTHING ANSWERING THE CHARGES OF THE RESIDENTS' SUPPORTERS. ON THE BASIS OF THE FOREGOING INFORMATION, BARRIO NASSCO APPEARS TO BE ROUGHLY TYPICAL OF OTHER POOR BARRIOS WHICH ARE BEING FORCED (OFTEN LITERALLY) TO MAKE WAY FOR INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT COUNTRY-WIDE. TOUSSAINT

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